

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-08

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NEA/AFN- WWEISLOGEL
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 080386

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MR, US, MO, CG

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON AF ASSISTANT
SECRETARY SCHAUFELE

1. AT HIS REQUEST, MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR KOCHMAN CALLED
ON AF ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFELE APRIL 8. AF/W
COUNTRY OFFICER ATTENDED MEETING.

2. KOCHMAN SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY RETURNED FROM CON-
SULTATIONS IN MAURITANIA AND WISHED TO REPORT TO AMBASSADOR
SCHAUFELE ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION IN MAURITANIA AND
TO DELIVER THE PERSONAL REGARDS OF PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH
AND FOREIGN MINISTER MOUKNASS. IN AN ASIDE,
HE NOTED THAT HE WAS SURE SCHAUFELE VERY BUSY GIVEN
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THE ZAIRE SITUATION, AND REMARKED THAT MOROCCAN DECISION
TO SEND TROOPS PROVED THAT THEY ARE TRUE ALLIES AND
THEREFORE SUCH ACTION ONLY NATURAL.

3. OPENING HIS PRESENTATION, KOCHMAN SAID THAT IN
NOUAKCHOTT HE HAD HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT OULD
DADDAH, THE FOREIGN MINISTER, AND OTHER SENIOR GOVERNMENT

MINISTERS. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH HAD EXPRESSED HOPE THAT AMBASSADOR SCHAUFLELE COULD VISIT MAURITANIA SOMETIME IN THE RELATIVELY NEAR FUTURE. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH ALSO

GREATLY APPRECIATED THE STATE/AID BRIEFING ON THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR THE SAHELIAN AMBASSADORS. THE MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS IS ENCOURAGED BY THE US INTEREST IN THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, AND NOTES THE STRONG INTEREST SHOWN BY THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN CARRYING ON AN ACTIVE US GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION. THE FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MAURITANIA RECEIVES FROM THE US AND OTHERS BECAUSE OF THE SAHEL DROUGHT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES HAS BEEN OF GREAT VALUE.

4. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, KOCHMAN WENT ON, HAS BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OTTAWA CILSS/CLUB DES AMIS MEETING MAY 30-JUNE 1. IF HE DOES DECIDE TO PRESIDE AT THE OTTAWA MEETING IN HIS CAPACITY AS CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE CILSS, THERE IS A CHANCE THAT HE WOULD WANT TO VISIT WASHINGTON. KOCHMAN THOUGHT WE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR THIS POSSIBILITY, AND SHOULD LOOK INTO THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IF IT COMES ABOUT. SCHAUFLELE RESPONDED THAT WE ARE ALREADY AWARE OF THIS AND ARE LOOKING INTO THE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE APPOINTMENTS WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW PRESIDENT CARTER'S CALENDAR LOOKS FOR SUCH A VISIT, BUT WE ARE CHECKING AND WILL LET KOCHMAN KNOW THE RESULTS. SCHAUFLELE ADDED THAT IF AN APPOINTMENT

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COULD BE ARRANGED, HE WOULD APPRECIATE KOCHMAN'S THOUGHTS ABOUT OTHERS PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH MIGHT WISH TO MEET HERE.

5. KOCHMAN SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO SUCH DETAILS ONCE HE LEARNED OF PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH'S DECISION ON ATTENDANCE AT THE OTTAWA MEETING, AND WOULD INFORM US. SCHAUFLELE SAID WE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE, AND ADDED THAT IN THE EVENT OF A VISIT PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH MIGHT FIND IT VERY WORTHWHILE TO MEET WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, SINCE SUCH DIRECT CONTACT IS VERY EFFECTIVE IN DEVELOPING CONTINUED ACTIVE CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. SCHAUFLELE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT A MEETING WITH NEW AID ADMINISTRATOR GILLIGAN WOULD BE EXTREMELY WORTHWHILE. KOCHMAN AND SCHAUFLELE AGREED TO TALK FURTHER ABOUT DETAILS ONCE PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH'S PLANS ARE FIRM.

6. SHIFTING TO OTHER MATTERS, KOCHMAN ASSERTED THAT THE

MAURITANIAN SITUATION IS GOOD IN SPITE OF PROPOGANDA BY A "CERTAIN PARTY" TO EXCITE INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION AND TO ATTEMPT TO DEMORALIZE MAURITANIANS BY ISSUING EXAGGERATED MAURITANIAN CASUALTY COUNTS IN CONNECTION WITH POLISARIO GUERRILLA ACTIVITY. KOCHMAN

SAID THE SITUATION IS UNDER CONTROL AND THE PEOPLE OF MAURITANIA ARE UN TIED AS NEVER BEFORE. HE ADDED THAT PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH HAD EMPHASIZED TO HIM AGAIN MAURITANIA'S WILLINGNESS TO HOLD A DIALOGUE BUT NOT, OF COURSE, ON THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER MAURITANIAN TERRITORY. IN RESPONSE TO SCHAUFELLE'S QUESTION ABOUT THE OAU SPECIAL SUMMIT MEETING ON THE WESTERN SAHARA, KOCHMAN SPOKE OF THE DISAGREEMENTS ON THIS ISSUE AND HAD NOVIEWSON WHEN SUCH A SUMMIT COULD BE IN FACT ARRANGED.

7. AT CLOSE OF MEETING KOCHMAN EMPHASIZED THAT IF PRESI-
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DENT OULD DADDAH DECIDES TO COME TO CANADA, MEETING IN WASHINGTON WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE IMPORTANT CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF INTEREST ON BOTH SIDES IN MAINTAINING DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE US AND MAURITANIA ON COMMON ISSUES AND PROBLEMS. KOCHMAN CONCLUDED THAT MAURITANIA HAS GREAT HOPES FOR CLOSE FRUITFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US.

8. FYI: IN CONVERSATION WITH AF/W COUNTRY OFFICER FOLLOWING MEETING, KOCHMAN ASKED IF WE HAVE RECEIVED WORD FROM OUR EMBASSY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT BY PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH. COUNTRY OFFICER CONFIRMED THAT WE HAD, AND NOTED THAT AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFELLE HAD INDICATED, WE HAD IMMEDIATELY BEGUN TO LOOK INTO POSSIBILITIES. KOCHMAN REPLIED THAT THIS WAS CONFIRMATION THAT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH IN WHICH HE HAD URGED THE PRESIDENT TO COME TO THE OTTAWA MEETING AND THEN TO WASHINGTON HAD HAD FULL EFFECT.
END FYI.
VANCE

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